

CANADA FIRST;

OR,

OUR NEW NATIONALITY;

AN ADDRESS,

BY

W. A. FOSTER, Esq.,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

TORONTO:

ADAM, STEVENSON & CO.

1871.

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There is an intellectual vivification, at last, in Canada, and there are indications that the native mind is at present awakening from the lethargy which has hitherto shrouded and dwarfed it. This is expressed in many ways, and is most observable in the large reading constituency that exists in the country, in the influence which has given the impulse to the publishing and importing of the Book Trade, and in the recognized necessity for a Canadian magazine—a vehicle of native thought and culture.

The present lecture, it is felt, will stimulate this to a further degree, and incite, it is hoped, a more hearty interest in Canadian affairs by the people of the country.

The Publishers trust to be able to issue, periodically, in the series they now initiate, a succession of papers on subjects that will prove of national importance, and their object will be gained if it aid, even in a small degree, to promote a more ambitious and healthy native literature.

THE PUBLISHERS.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1871.

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CANADA FIRST.



THREE hundred and thirty-seven years ago Jacques Cartier erected the cross at Gaspé, and, amid the triumphal shout of his hardy mariners, flung to the breeze the *Fleur-de-lis* of old France. Since then what a land of adventure and romance has this been !

We may have no native ballad for the nursery, or home-born epic for the study ; no tourney feats to rhapsodise over, or mock heroics to emblazon on our escutcheon ; we may have no prismatic fables to illumine and adorn the preface of our existence, or curious myths to obscure and soften the sharp outline of our early history ; yet woven into the tapestry of our past, are whole volumes of touching poetry and great tomes of glowing prose that rival fiction in eagerness of incident, and in marvellous climax put fable to the blush. We need not ransack foreign romance for valorous deeds, nor are we compelled to go abroad for sad tales of privation and suffering. The most chivalrous we can match ; the most tried we can parallel. Each stage of this country's progress recounts to us, in all the simplicity of unpremeditated record, sacrifices endured, hardships encountered, and brave deeds done, not amid the applause of an interested and anxious world, nor

yet amid the pomp and pride of oft recurring circumstance, but rather in silent, ever-changing strait and myriad-formed danger, when every faculty sprang into earnest, vigorous action, and every sense grew sharp by reason of restless emergency ; when civilization grappled with herculean savagery, and man fought with nature ; and when, alas ! the consciousness of duty done was the sole reward achieved, or the solitary unnamed mound, chapleted by the winter's snow, was the only monument won. Yet there are few heroes in our Pantheon. Where every man does his duty, heroes are not wanted and are not missed.

For years our frontier echoed to the roar of battle ; the shrill scream of the Indian and the hoarse yell of the white man mingling in death-agony ; while along the dim corridors of our forests the unpitying North Wind came laden with the half-stifled sighs of lonely yet patient women, and the shivering wail of starving children. In the old times war raged almost continuously, and every man was a soldier. First came the contests with the Iroquois and the Hurons, garnished with sad tales of civilized atrocities and savage vengeance. If one's appetite for horrors demands gratification, the needful stimulant may be found in the details of the massacre of Lachine, when 1,400 Iroquois warriors swooped down by night upon a slumbering village, and plied the torch and tomahawk with all the relentlessness of savage hate, showing mercy to neither age nor sex, and reserving only for a sickening butchery, those whom the inexorable flame spared. Two hundred men, women and children were burnt alive, and those who died under prolonged tortures were not a few. Houses, crops, everything was reduced to ashes, and woe held exultant sway amid desolation and blood. Next came the wars between England and France, with their mimic reproduction on this continent ; the ambitions,

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animosities and jealousies of European diplomacy bringing devastation and death into Canadian homes; and the swaying incidents of the Old World, finding their obsequious parallel, three thousand miles across the sea, in the wilds of the New. In vain the New Englander made desperate and persistent efforts to win Canada. In spite of repeated invasions, and in the face of large odds, the flag of France kept proudly afloat. A people varying in number, from 25,000 in 1679 to 70,000 in 1761, not only thwarted every attempt at their subjugation by the much more densely populated colonies to the south, but, with a little stingily rendered assistance from the parent land, held their own against repeated attack by land and sea. Mournful is the history of those days. There were no ambulance trains then, no Christian charities to assuage the horrors of battle, and little skill to alleviate its sufferings. Mercy was a word unknown, for the civilized had become apt pupils of the savage. Need I rehearse in your ears the terrible punishment inflicted on the simple-minded, inoffensive Acadians who "dwelt in the love of God and of man,"—"their dwellings open as day, and the hearts of the owners"—when hundreds of families were torn apart, wife from husband, child from parent, and,

" the freighted vessels departed,

" Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile,

" Exile without an end, and without an example in story ;"

discharging their living cargoes at intervals along the coast from Boston to Carolina, and flinging like outcasts among a people alien in race and language, those homeless, houseless, broken-hearted wanderers. O ! it was a cruel act without palliation, an inhuman vengeance without excuse ! Who has not read of Evangeline, her heart filled with inexpressible sweetness,

pursuing through the slow-revolving years the phantom of her love, and losing the celestial brightness of her girlhood in "the unsatisfied longing, and the dull, deep pain and constant anguish of patience;" or of Gabriel, "weary with waiting, unhappy and restless, seeking, in the western wilds, oblivion of self and of sorrow;" or of the dying Marguerite, of whom the sweet-voiced Whittier has sung :—

"Done was the work of her hands, she had eaten her bitter bread ;
"The world of the alien people lay behind her, dim and dead,
"But her soul went back to its child time ; she saw the sun o'erflow
"With gold the Basin of Minas, and set over Gaspereau ;
"She saw the face of her mother, she heard the song she sang,
"And far off, faintly, slowly, the bell for vespers rang."

But pathetic incident must give place before the march of historical event. It was not until wearied out by incessant attack, deserted by the parent land, and overborne by superior numbers, that the French Canadian laid down his arms and exchanged his allegiance. In the spring of 1758, 30,000 British combatants were ready to march on Canada, not merely raw militiamen, but regular troops as well, led by officers trained on European battle-fields, armed with artillery and siege requisites, and supported by an active and daring fleet. The Canadians knew their danger and prepared to meet it. An inquest of the inhabitants was held, and the male population of the colony between the ages of sixteen and sixty was found to be but 15,000. Aid was implored from France, but instead of munitions of war and recruits, the devoted colonists were vouchsafed official despatches recommending them to dispute every inch of territory, foot to foot, with the British, and to sustain the honour of the French arms to the utmost. "Not

only would additional troops be a means of aggravating the evils of the dearth which has too long afflicted the colony"—wrote the French Minister—"but the chances are great that if sent thither, they would be captured on their way to you, by the British." Though thus basely deserted; though exhausted by continual marching and incessant fighting; though their dwellings were falling to ruin and their fields lay waste; though their wives and children were crying for bread; the despised and forsaken French Canadians neither flung aside their allegiance nor forgot their honour, but plunged into the final struggle with a devotion which excites our wonder and admiration. It was of no avail. On the 13th September, 1759, Quebec was taken. One year afterwards the French flag was hauled down and Canada became a part of the British Empire. Great was the joy manifested in England over the conquest of Louis XIV.'s "acres of snow." Addresses were presented to the King, congratulating him on this much-coveted addition to the Imperial possessions; a statue in Westminster Abbey was accorded to Wolfe; public thanks were decreed to each of the chief officers who had taken part in the Quebec expedition; and it was ordered that prayers of thanksgiving should be offered to Heaven throughout the whole Empire.

But change of rulers did not bring permanent peace to the harassed colonists. Sixteen years after Wolfe took Quebec, Canada again became the scene of war. The American Revolution broke out, and Canada, with a population of about 70,000 was called upon to meet the attack of a people numbering 3,000,000. Every art of persuasion was tried in vain by the Revolutionists to win the Canadians to their side; due provision was made in the Federal Constitution for the admission of Canada into the new confederacy, but without the anticipated

result. Then it was concluded that more severe measures should be resorted to, in order to bring the refractory and blind inhabitants of this ice-clad region to a proper sense of their interests, if not their duty. One enthusiastic American Colonel proposed to conquer and hold the whole country with 2,000 men. Finally, Canada was invaded by an army under General Schuyler, but, after a futile effort to carry out his instructions to take Quebec, Montreal, and other places, the General withdrew.

At the close of the revolutionary war, twenty-five thousand persons, exiles from the States, sought refuge in Canada. When we call to mind that there was not a tree cut from Ottawa to Kingston, a distance of 150 miles, that Kingston was a village of a few huts, and that around the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie all was a dense wilderness, we can form some idea of the hardships that fell to the lot of those who sacrificed everything but honour, on the shrine of allegiance. Remember that the fighting done during the revolutionary war was not monopolized by the regular troops of Great Britain ; there were corps and regiments of American loyalists with familiar titles and designations. They had their King's Rangers and Queen's Rangers, the Prince of Wales' American Volunteers, Georgia Loyalists, New Jersey Volunteers, Loyal New Englanders, Maryland Loyalists, Pennsylvania Loyalists, and so on, just as we have our Queen's Own or the Prince of Wales' regiment. Yet, when peace was made between Britain and the States, those loyalists who had placed their lives and property in peril were left to the tender mercies of the revolutionists, without any stipulation as to their protection, without any security even for their lives. Lord Loughborough spoke truly when in his place in the House of Lords he said : "In ancient or modern history there has not

been so shameful a desertion of men who have sacrificed all to their duty and to their reliance upon British faith." Lord North spoke in like terms : " Never were the honour, the principles, the policy of a nation so grossly abused as in the desertion of those men, who are now exposed to every punishment that vengeance and poverty can inflict because they were not rebels." Exile was the reward of those who had been forsaken by king and country, and thus Canada became the home of those whom we call the U. E. Loyalists.

Thirty years after the acknowledgment of American Independence, came the war of 1812, with Canada once more the battle ground. An Act was passed by Congress calling 100,000 volunteers into active service, but the Canadians were neither deceived by proclamations nor dismayed by threats. A call to arms rang throughout the country, echoing from lake to river, and piercing the inmost recesses of the forest. How the eyes of the old refugee loyalists must have flashed as the rusty flint-lock was taken from the rack above the fire-place, and the recollection of by-gone hardships and persecution came surging up from the past ! How must the pulses of the young men have throbbed as they grasped the trusty rifle, and, amid the sudden silence of home preparation for departure, pondered over the sad story of their parents' exile. Now there was opportunity for redressing old wrongs that clung to memory with fierce tenacity ! There was no calculation of the chances of success ; no reckoning over the probable consequences of failure. All that they had forgotten was their desertion, in the hour of peril, by king and country. There were but 280,000 people all told in Upper and Lower Canada, yet the event justified their self-confidence. General Hull with 2,500 men invaded Canada by way of Sandwich, and then surrendered himself and his army pris-

CANADA FIRST; OR,

oners of war at Detroit. General Van Rensselaer appeared at Queenston with 2,000 men, but only to surrender at least 900 of them. General Smyth landed 3,000 men at Fort Erie, but was at once driven back. General Pike brought 2,500 men as far as Little York, where he and 200 of them were blown into the air by an explosion at the Old Fort. General Winchester led 1,000 men to Frenchtown, near Detroit, but their end was capture. General Dearborne, with 3,000 men, was defeated at Stony Creek. General Harrison, with 2,500 men, was beaten at Fort Meigs. General Wilkinson, with 3,000 men, was utterly routed at Chrysler's Farm. General Hampden set out with a grand army of 8,000 men to capture Montreal, but he suffered an ignominious defeat from a handful of Canadian militia under De Salaberry. General McClure succeeded in taking Niagara, but Hampden's defeat caused him to retire. General Brown crossed at Black Creek, with 5,000 men, but after the experience of Lundy's Lane and Fort Erie, deemed it prudent to withdraw. At no point along the frontier did the invaders gain any important advantage, and when the war ended, Canada had not lost one inch of territory.

These are merely historical facts, but it is just as well to keep them at our fingers' end, for they are not unpleasant to reflect upon. Were we disposed to vaunt ourselves, we might come down to more modern times, and ask: Was there a display of timidity in the Trent affair? Did Canadians hold back when the sanctity of our common flag was violated? Were reasons for neutrality in the impending struggle searched out with eagerness? Or did our people sigh over their little hoards of money—the fruit of years of hard work—or look with fainting heart at the scarce-born evidences of substantial progress that surrounded them? Like the everlasting fire on the altar,

loyalty gave forth a steady light, its flame never brighter or more pure than in the hour of national peril. Think you, now, that Canada has no claim to rank with those lands where adventure has had play and romance has had a home, or that the heroic devotion which distinguished its inhabitants, of French and British origin, is less worthy of a place in story than the most cherished traditions of the old world?

But our past is characterised by something more than romantic attachment to a flag, or chivalrous devotion to an idea. Sentiment did not blunt the edge of industry, nor suffering give excuse for idleness. Every breathing spell of war gave the husbandman opportunity. The sword and musket were exchanged for the plough and sickle; and a fruitful soil, feeling the warm glow of peace, yielded a grateful return. The forest echoed the ring of the axe and the crash of timber. Amid the solitariness of the back-woods the sturdy settler was hewing out a home for himself and his family, with hunger and cold kept merely at arm's length. Between him and his nearest neighbour, miles of dark forest intervened. The traveller or trader picked his way across tangled brushwood and fallen timber, or tramped wearily over a trackless wilderness of snow, finding few finger-posts by the road-side to point out the direction he wished to take. All kinds of field work were done by hand, for there were very few oxen and still fewer horses. In 1789, the mails left Upper Canada for England about twice a year, so that epistolary effort was not much taxed. For years the only road from Lower Canada was by the St. Lawrence, the rapids being ascended by canoes and bateaux in ten or twelve days, until the flat-bottomed Durham boats, steered with a ten-foot pole and pushed along by two men on each side, came into use. We can read in the *York Gazette*, of April 29th, 1815,

that the Lieut-Governor, Sir George Murray, Kt., arrived at York from Burlington, in a birch canoe. But none of us need go far to learn all about the hardships of the early settlers, for witnesses are still among us who passed through the ordeal. Now we can afford to look back with some degree of complacency, for industry has produced abundant fruit, and we are reaping in joy a harvest sown in tears and trouble. As farm after farm was rescued from native wildness, schemes of internal improvement, first viewed as shadowy impossibilities, grew into reality, while the bounteous yield of a virgin soil sent new life into every artery of trade. Land was gradually freed from the tight-locking folds of rapacious hydras, and the barnacles that fattened on the offices of state were torn from the vitals of the country. What has been the result? In 1812, the population of Canada was 280,000 ; to-day Canada has over four millions of people. In 1806, the value of the exports from the whole of the Provinces was \$928,000 ; last year our exports were over seventy-three millions, and our imports over seventy-four millions of dollars. In 1815, the first steamboat was built on Lake Ontario ; to-day Canada is the third maritime power in the world, with *six* million tons entered inwards, and *five* million tons entered outwards, engaged in carrying on our trade. In 1851, Canada had but fifty-five miles of railway ; to-day there are three thousand miles in operation, several hundreds of miles under construction, and a scheme on foot to build 2,500 miles more that will present a route between England and Japan, 1,100 miles shorter than by New York and San Francisco, and give us a continuous line of four thousand miles across the continent. We possess a system of canals the most complete in the world, that cost us twenty millions of dollars, —so complete indeed that President Grant looks upon it as

part of the St. Lawrence navigation. The aggregate of our banking capital is over thirty-six millions of dollars, and the savings of our people, represented by deposits in our monetary institutions, amount to about sixty-four millions.

We have coal in Nova Scotia, on the Atlantic ; coal at the Saskatchewan, in the heart of the Continent ; and coal at Vancouver's Island, on the Pacific. We have mineral wealth as various as our needs, and, in extent, boundless. We have, at our doors, exhaustless fisheries, the richest in the world, furnishing an annual yield estimated at twenty million dollars to the various countries engaged in them, and giving us a nursery for adventurous and hardy seamen. Our agricultural product is immense, and capable of indefinite expansion ; and our forests are the envy of the world. We have, or will have shortly, 70,000 sailors, and now have at least 700,000 men between the ages of 20 and 60 available for defensive purposes. As for territory, we have more than half the continent, and elbow-room for a population of 40,000,000. Religious freedom exists here in its most perfect form, and our elaborate system of common schools, colleges and universities gives an equal opportunity to all to achieve distinction. We have political institutions combining the greatest freedom with the most perfect restraint upon riot, recognizing the rights of the people without begetting distrust or disrespect for lawful authority : neither ignoring the poor nor bringing terror to the rich ; giving voice to property without drowning the tones of labour ; allowing complete self-government by means of a graduated jurisdiction and, through a well-understood and easily enforced system of responsibility, admitting of reform without revolution, government without despotism. Our Dominion Legislature will compare favourably with any deliberative body in the world. Accident may have

brought to the surface of politics a good many who float by reason of the cork-like lightness of their brains; but, on the whole, our public men are as able as those of other countries. Our politicians have certainly carried party strife to the extreme, but it is an axiom that the smaller the pit, the more fiercely do the rats fight. The world would be rather a stupid place if all men thought and acted alike. The charms of novelty and variety are too attractive, even to the idlest and most listless, to render an unbroken harmony either pleasant to the eye or grateful to the ear. Diversities of temper, of understanding, of interest, are necessary to stimulate our love of existence; our impulses, offensive and defensive, serving as a preservative from mental paralysis, as a preventive as regards public langour and impotence, and as a safe-guard against the enervating influences of a dreary, monotonous dulness. The old Norse Mythology, with its Thor hammers and Thor hammerings, appeals to us,—for we are a Northern people,—as the true out-crop of human nature, more manly, more real, than the weak marrow-bones superstition of an effeminate South. For the purposes of attrition, the bigoted dotard, the reckless empiric, and the shallow babbler are useful in their way, as are also the wise, the cautious, and the prudent. To produce the fine flour, we must have a nether as well as an upper mill-stone. We cannot construct politicians, nor manufacture political parties impromptu, for there is always an inert mass, incapable of sudden emotion, subject merely to that oscillation which gives victory or defeat. One might as well try to form a political party from persons of a peculiar physiognomy, as to fit men into sets of political principles. They must come together naturally or not at all, for men cannot be sized in principles, as if at company drill. Let the worst come, however; we know

that political parties have their beginning and their end. Babels are built, and confusion of tongues ensues. But when discussion is pushed to the extreme, and enthusiasts and demagogues have gone mad, the turning point is reached, and an union of those who have their senses left, marks the beginning of a new era. When the time does come for a renewal of strife, we spin around, in accordance with the immutable laws by which the political world is regulated, and we cannot, if we would, avoid the scrambling, jostling, quarrelling and fighting, incident to the enjoyment of free institutions in a free country. However, if there be a common object in view, and that the welfare of the country, it is best for us not to complain too much.

Formerly, the provinces, whose destinies are now linked, were disunited, knowing little, and caring less, about each other. Instead of an interchange of commodities, and of floating population, the current ran in a foreign direction, and thousands of our young men were not only lost to us, but went to the building up of our rivals—yes, rivals ! else what means this shutting us out with higher tariffs, thwarting us by harsh legislation, abrogating reciprocity treaties, and obstructing our development ? But we were not always considered rivals. At one time the prospect looked gloomy enough. Old Canada was a dependency, with its best portion shut in from the seaboard for five months of the year ; separated from those of kindred sympathies, and acknowledging a like allegiance, by an almost untraversable tract of country ; gazing at the prosperity of a nation that held out every inducement to unite with it ; without manufactures or capital, yet witnessing a stream of British wealth pouring into the lap of its overshadowing neighbour ; thinly populated and outbid in attracting immigration. Times have changed, however, and there is no reason why this

era should not be but the dawn of our prosperity. All that has been done here, has been accomplished in the teeth of competition with a nation which calls itself, and is generally accepted as, the most enterprising of all nations ; which "beats all creation" in everything it does, "steals the keys from snoring Destiny," and outruns time in its hurry to do it. We have been alternately flattered and threatened, yet neither wile nor threat has mortgaged our country with dishonour, or caused us to sacrifice our identity. So if we take pride in the past there is some excuse for us ; if we hope for the future, we have, at least, some justification. Thanks to Dr. Ryerson, our school children have now the means of acquiring a knowledge of Canadian geography without first searching through every State in the American Union to find the country they live in, and can now learn something of Canadian history without first pumping dry the reservoir of Yankee buncombe.

Thus far, my object has been to indicate our advancement as a country and as a people, but it may be well to consider whether individual effort has kept pace, in individual results, with combined action and joint progress ; whether the unit has distinguished itself when isolated from the mass ; whether the mind has grown inert by reason of the need to supply mere bodily wants ; whether chopping and digging have blunted sensibilities, and kept in the back-ground the more refined ambitions of the soul ; whether our soil is more fertile than our brains ; whether scholarship and talent find in Canada a congenial home. It may be bold for mere colonists, mere backwoodsmen, to venture on dangerous comparisons ; but let us hazard results. There are Canadian names known to the world, outside our boundaries, on which renown has fallen, and we are entitled, at least, to claim whatever credit is our due.

Thanks to the industry of Mr. Morgan, we have not far to go for information. Sir William Logan is one of the great geologists of the day ; Sir Duncan Gibb is among the foremost in medical science. In Art, distinction has been attained by Canadians, one of whom flourished in Russia ; Gilbert S. Newton became famous for colour, and was made a Royal Academician in London ; Falardeau, a poor Quebec boy, won celebrity in Italy. Among ourselves there are names we delight to honour—Paul Kane, Plamondon, Bourassa, Berthon, Hamel, and Legare—all gifted artists. We claim Sir Samuel Cunard, the father of steam navigation on the Atlantic ; Sir Hugh Allan, the largest ship-owner in the world ; and Sir Edward Belcher, the first surveying officer of the day. Scholarship and profound thought have not suffered from our practical life. Archæological lore finds a master spirit in Dr. McCaul, of our national University, who is pronounced, by the *Saturday Review*, to be a better scholar than any of the antiquaries who have taken to the elucidation of Britanno-Roman inscriptions. Dr. Wilson not only casts new light upon the archæology and pre-historic annals of Scotland, but dives into the ethnology and antiquities of America, with a zeal and success which evoke the admiration of those skilled in such subjects. From the Ottawa region Mr. Todd sends forth the most useful and complete text-book that has ever appeared, on the practical operation of the British constitution. John Foster Kirk, of New Brunswick, has, according to the highest critics, entitled himself to take rank with those accomplished historians, Prescott and Motley, by the production of his history of Charles the Bold. We can boast, too, of humourists, novelists, and tale-writers, who have distinguished themselves. Judge Haliburton, of Nova Scotia, has won fame through the sayings and doings of Sam Slick. Be-

sides him, we claim Major Richardson, the author of "Wacousta;" Professor de Mille, of New Brunswick, who wrote "The Dodge Family"; Mr. Jenkins, the author of "Ginx's Baby"; De Boucherville, Bourassa, and Lajoie, who have, in their writings, evidenced all the sparkle and dash of true Frenchmen; Mrs. Fleming, of New Brunswick, known to American literature as Cousin May Carleton; Rossana Leprohen; Louisa Murray, who contributes to *Once a Week*; and Mrs. Moodie, who has given to us a vivid picture of old-time hardships, in her "Roughing it in the Bush." Our historians are Garneau, Christie, Murdock, McMullen, Lindsey, and Canniff. In Charles Heavysege, the author of "Saul," and "Jepthah's Daughter," we have a dramatic poet of great imagination and feeling, whose productions were received with considerable wonder by foreign critics. One of the great Quarterlies, the *North British*, said, "This work is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable ever written out of Great Britain. This copy," the critic goes on to remark, "was given to the writer of the present article by Mr. Nathaniel Hawthorne, to whose recommendation of this, to him and to us, unknown Canadian poet, our readers, and English literature generally, are beholden for their first introduction to a most curious work." Charles Sangster chants, in no unworthy strains, the beauties and sublimities of our great waters. Of him Dr. O. W. Holmes wrote, "His verse adds new interest to the woods and streams amidst which he sings, and embellishes the charms of the maidens he celebrates." The soul-stirring lyrics of Alexander McLachlan combine manly thought with apt and terse expression; and those of us who have been fortunate enough to have familiarized ourselves with them, need not a Sir Archibald Alison to tell us that the author is one truly inspired with the genius of

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poetry. Isidore Ascher has sung tenderly and sweetly of household gods, in his "Voices from the Hearth;" and Charles Mair, the Canadian Keats, tempts us with delicious melody away to the sunny hills of his own "Dreamland."* However, we do not make pretence to having achieved, as a people, great renown in literature. "The Family Physician," and "Every Man His own Lawyer," are still purchased with avidity, while the poem or the essay lies on the bookseller's shelf, accumulating dust and respectability; though, in this particular, we are perhaps no worse off than our neighbours. We have done well, everything considered, and our cousins across the lines have little room for brag over us, as there are not a dozen names in their literature that can be placed in the front rank among the poets, historians, and novelists of to-day.

In the annals of war, Canadians have achieved distinction for skill and valour. The old French times give to us the names of D'Iberville, of Montreal, who was reputed the most skilful naval officer in the service of France, and of De Léry, of Quebec, one of its first military engineers. Need we call the roll of those Canadians who have done battle for Britain? Major-General Dunn campaigned in Egypt, Italy and Spain; Major-General Beckwith fought at the Nile and at Waterloo; Admiral Sir Provo Wallis captured the Chesapeake; Admiral Watt figured in a hundred engagements; Admiral Sir George Westphal was wounded on board the *Victory* at Trafalgar; Sir Thos. Wiltshire served in India and in the Peninsular war; Captain McNab, of Toronto, was on Picton's staff at Waterloo; Sir Richard England led the 3rd division at Inkerman; Sir Fenwick Williams won fame at Kars, and Sir John Inglis at Luck-

* Those who desire to acquaint themselves with the best efforts of our song writers will find the Rev. E. H. Dewart's collection very useful.

now ; Col. Dunn, of Toronto, was selected, as the bravest of the immortal Six Hundred, to receive the Victoria Cross ; Read, of Perth, though a surgeon, won the same reward of valour, for daring feats in the Indian mutiny. Side by side, with the soldier of the motherland, the Canadian fought with equal devotion, and fell with equal honour. The hot sun of India looks down upon the graves of Montizambert, Evans, Joly, Sewell, and Vaughan ; in the Crimea, Parker fell with his face to the foe ; and on the ramparts of the Redan died Welsford, with the bloom of youth glowing on his cheek, and all a boy's enthusiasm fresh at his heart.

We have still another record of competition and success which is worthy of reference. The great British Universities have not been left untried by Canadians. Hincks, of Toronto, Redpath, of Montreal, Vidal, of Sarnia, proved that it is possible for our young men to compete successfully with the best. At the Staff College, at Sandhurst, Ridout, of Toronto, headed the list of candidates from all branches of the service. Robinson, of Toronto, came out fourth, and Benson, of St. Catharines, was the recipient of special honours for the high stand he took. Even the great public schools of England have not been essayed in vain. Not long ago Plum, of Niagara, was the head boy at Rugby.

But with so much reason for self-felicitation, we are not apprehensive that vanity will obtain undue ascendancy in the national character—for some time at least. Lest we should feel disposed to vaunt ourselves unduly, it may be well to bear in mind that Canada has been frequently spoken of with contempt. The normal old-world idea respecting us and our country resolves itself into confused pictures, in which frost and snow, falling timber, snow shoes, furs, and wild Indians are the

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most prominent, if not the only, objects of vision. Peculiar notions are suggested by the word "Colony," so that it requires no great dexterity in intonation to use it as an efficient term of reproach. We know that when the absence of a criminal was desired, he was transported to a colony; when a political or religious zealot became obnoxious, he fled or was banished to a colony; when a "ne'er-do-weel" was to be got rid of, he was assisted to a colony. Wild spirits sought it through love of adventure; persons of strong religious convictions braved its unknown dangers through enthusiasm; and, when resources grew narrow and bread scarce, gnawing poverty drove into the emigrant-ship many a true man and noble woman, snapping heart-strings that would not be untied, uprooting tender associations that seemed incapable of disentanglement, and unveiling to the rude gaze of the stranger all those sanctities of emotion whose shrine is the innermost tabernacle of our being. The tremulous farewells wafted from the ship's side, were but the prelude to a new life of heroic purpose and resolute action. We can scarcely wonder, therefore, that the word colony carries with it some awkward as well as sad significations. The establishment of the colonies of Ancient Greece was occasioned by necessity; those of Rome by utility; and those of Modern Europe by greed and ambition. The American Colonies were looked upon as feeders to the Mother Land; their resources being regarded as so much plunder for home enterprise, and their population as legitimate prey for home avarice. In the old French times Canada was farmed out to monopolists; and even when French Canadians here were fighting for their very existence against large odds, Frenchmen in France were writing disparagingly of them, as "a people who multiplied slowly in the woods, who associated with savages, but who

furnished no return to the royal exchequer, no soldier to the royal host, no colonial merchandise to the home trader." Brave Canadian officers were slighted and displaced to make room for the indigent yet supercilious favourites of the home authorities ; and we read that the appointment of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, as Governor of Montreal, was conceded with much hesitation, because his countess was a native Canadian. Coming down to more modern times, we can appease our hunger for criticism and satisfy our thirst for notice, to the fullest extent, from books of travel, as well as from the periodical press. Dr. John Howison, a Scotch traveller, tells the world of a people (meaning ourselves) "who are the untutored incorrigible beings that they were when, the ruffian remnant of a disbanded regiment or outlawed refuse of some European nation, they sought refuge in the wilds of Upper Canada, aware that they would neither find the means of sustenance, nor be countenanced in any civilized country." Sir Charles Dilke, in his "Greater Britain," pronounces Canadian loyalty to be mere hatred to the United States, and sees no reason why the Mother Country should spend blood and treasure in protecting Canadians against the consequences of their hate. The *Edinburgh Review* described us as "retainers who will neither give nor accept notice to quit." The Fenian raids evoked some plain language from a portion of the English press. One journal, the *Army and Navy Gazette*, said :—"There are upwards of 3,000,000 sturdy colonial Britons there, all told, and they are so dreadfully afraid of the approach of the raw, ragged Fenians that may succeed in forcing the United States' *cordon*, as to be incessantly calling on the mother country for military aid. Every newspaper in the colony is filled with the same doleful

appeal for help. Canadians are calling lustily upon England to do for them what, if they had any pluck or spirit, they ought to do for themselves. They yield us no revenue, they give no encouragement to our trade, and yet, in the moment of assumed danger, they call out with almost feminine nervousness for help." One lady traveller, whose name is not vouchsafed to us, in the record of her experience in Canada, speaks of our most respectable society as being characterized by the manners of the kitchen, and the grotesque snobbery of the servants' hall. "Their ladies," says our waspish critic, "do not regard incivility as unladylike, and see little or no impropriety in rudeness, oftentimes mistaking the former for haughtiness, and supposing the latter to be the perquisite of good breeding."

Besides this direct method of toning our vanity, there is a sort of compliment and method of patronage that loses none of its sting by reason of indirectness. When Dr. McCaul deciphers obscure inscriptions, great wonder is expressed by foreign critics that so much sagacity and knowledge should ripen here; when Dr. Wilson writes of Pre-historic Man, amazement takes possession of the reviewer's breast; when Todd defines the limits of the royal prerogative and the theory and practice of parliamentary privilege, it is considered a remarkable circumstance that England should be indebted to a colonist for such a work; and even when a Canadian Volunteer produces a book which is deemed worthy of translation into French and German, certain of the military authorities throw up their hands at such presumption, and point their satire with epithets whose force is supposed to lie in certain equivocal associations connected with the word "Colony," and the designation "Colonist."

A young country is peculiarly sensitive to outside criticism.

A very few words spoken in our favour, by a stranger, give us pleasure ; and a very few malicious words, uttered to our detriment, irritate sorely. The fact of being a dependent, though but in name, does not blunt the edge of harshly worded rebuke. Our cousins across the lines, with all their self-esteem and resources, and strength, smarted under the lash of a foreign press ; so that Canadians, with fewer pretensions, might be excused for displaying somewhat of a similar weakness. It was easy to laugh at us when, with pardonable vanity, we examined English opinion for some word of encouragement, some tribute to our loyalty, some recognition of our industry, some acknowledgment of our progress. The circumstances in which the various Provinces were placed, as well as the recollection of what had been endured in the preservation of our allegiance, naturally enough prompted us to look to the Mother Land for some appreciation of our steadiness of purpose. Little satisfaction was derived, by us at least, from the dictatorial utterances, and still less from the scoldings indulged in with "all the license of ink," that came to us across the ocean. We find, also, some ground of complaint in that disregard of the tie of kinship and the bond of common allegiance, which leads so many British travellers and writers to lavish their compliments on the United States and their satire on Canada. Time and again comparisons have been made to our prejudice in respect of progress. Time and again have we been lectured on our bubbling and seething loyalty, and charged with an inclination to sponge on the Imperial exchequer. It is not difficult to ridicule hearty expressions of attachment, nor does it require great cleverness to fling off the word "lip-loyalty." Those who so glibly utter the reproach forget what it is that they are

striking at. The citizen of the United States has a flag of his own, and a nationality of his own—the Canadian has ever had to look abroad for his. For years British policy isolated the Provinces, to prevent their absorption in the neighbouring Republic, and in so doing stunted the growth of a native national sentiment. The exiles of the American revolution carried hither the recollection of injuries endured and losses sustained, for a cause which they, foolishly or wisely, deemed worthy of the sacrifice. Many of them gave up home, lands, kindred, and the associations of youth, and exchanged comfort and ease for the dangers and hardships of an inhospitable and unknown wilderness. When Englishmen, therefore, undertake to cast reflections on a loyalty that has so frequently proved itself a reality, they should first consider how much is covered by the boast. Now that we are prosperous and united, vigorous and well-to-do ; and now that some of the traditions of the past are gradually losing their hold on the imagination of a new generation, that sentiment which so long found an outlet in declamation over the glories of the Mother Land, will draw a more natural nourishment from native sources. Critics should consider whether the doling out of so much gratitude for so much benefit received will be more acceptable than the hereditary romantic attachment which allowed no danger, no loss, no neglect to sully its purity. Young as we are, we are too old to be abused without retort ; weak as we may be, we are too strong to be bullied with impunity. What we demand from English writers is fair play ; and should the hour of peril come, we may venture to ask from England, without sinking our self-respect, a quantum of assistance proportioned rightly to the part we play in attack or defence. No decorations lavishly distributed, no baronetcies generously conferred, can or will answer as a

substitute for respect and kindness or a mutual interchange of affection.*

* The following extract from the *Church Herald*, the organ of the Church of England in Canada, is worthy of serious consideration :—"Hereditary honours may be suited to a country of hereditary estates. But Canada is not a country of hereditary estates ; nor is there, amongst our people, the slightest tendency to make it so. Consequently, if our leading men, instead of being knighted, are made baronets, there will be some risk of our having baronets sinking into the poorer classes of society, and trailing their escutcheons in the dust. Even in England, in spite of primogeniture and family settlements, there is a considerable number of pauper peers, whose titled indigence often forces them to sponge on the public, or resort to the still lower expedient of marrying money-bags. But in England the fortunes of the landed nobility and gentry are stability itself compared with the perpetual fluctuations of Colonial wealth. No doubt, in creating Colonial baronets care will always be taken to select men so rich as to hold out a fair hope of their transmitting large properties to their descendants. But this will tend to another evil, inasmuch as it will lead the public mind to connect honour with wealth, instead of connecting it with personal merit ; and, assuredly, the lesson that wealth is above merit is not exactly the one which commercial Colonies need to learn.

"There is another consideration which somewhat alloys our satisfaction in seeing an English baronetcy conferred on a Canadian. We regard with jealousy on behalf of Canada anything which tends to make her leading men look to another country, even though it be our mother country, for the highest rewards of merit. If Canada is to be a nation, it is time that her sons should begin to look for the highest rewards of merit here. Hitherto, the case of all the Colonies, in this respect, has been the same. None of them have been regarded, either by merchants or politicians, as their country, the ultimate sphere of their own efforts and aspirations, and the future home of their children. The Colonial merchant has amassed wealth in the hope of carrying it home to England, buying a great house in London, mingling as a member of the great plutocracy in London society, and rolling in a carriage round Hyde Park. The politician, in the same manner, has looked for his highest meed, not to the applause of the Colony, or to the gratitude of future generations of colonists, but to the favour of Downing Street, and has trimmed his course in the hope of receiving the rewards which Downing Street has to bestow, and of ultimately going home to enjoy them.

As between the various Provinces comprising the Dominion, we need some cement more binding than geographical contact ; some bond more uniting than a shiftless expediency ; some

While this continues it is impossible that we should have truly national statesmen or chiefs of commerce and industry thoroughly identified with our interests, present and future, and capable of the patriotic munificence which, it must be owned, nobly distinguishes the wealthy men of the United States. Canadian men will seek to leave their names in the British peerage, not in the statute book of Canada ; Canadian merchants, instead of spending their wealth in the acquisition of the renown which belongs to the founders and benefactors of great national institutions, will hoard it as a means of founding a family, and they will transfer it and themselves as speedily as possible to the only country where a family can be securely founded. We prize as highly as is possible to prize it, the continuance of an affectionate connection between Canada and the mother country ; but the connection must be so regulated as not to prevent Canada from becoming a nation.

"What we say with regard to the State in Canada, may be said with regard to the Church also. We have sometimes heard complaints that the merits of Colonial clergymen are not recognized by promotion in the English Church ; but we cannot sympathize with these complaints, because it appears to us that such promotion, however gratifying in some respects, would confirm Colonial Churchmen in a misapprehension of their position. Let the Church in Canada keep the most grateful recollection of her origin, and cherish her spiritual connection with the Church of the mother country ; but she must remember that she is herself the Church, not of England, but of Canada, and that she will have to draw her life from the soil in which she is planted, and to adapt herself to the circumstances and exigencies of her actual position. Our laity are apt to fancy that they are still members of a Church established and endowed by the State, and to refuse to contribute for the support of the clergy to anything like the extent which the voluntary system requires. Perhaps the clergy, on their part, sometimes do a little to keep up this illusion. Both clergy and laity, however, must get rid of it, if the Church is to prosper in this country. The Canadian laity have to support a Canadian clergy under the voluntary system ; the clergy have to gain the confidence of the Canadian laity under the same system, and to found the Church on the free allegiance of the Canadian people."

lodestar more potent than a mere community of profit. Temporizing makeshifts may suit a futureless people. Unless we intend to be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water until the end, we should in right earnest set about strengthening the foundations of our identity ; unless we are ready to become the laughing-stock of the world, we had better not lose sight of the awful possibility of sinking under self-imposed burdens of territory. It is not by mimicking the formalities of the old world, or aping time-worn solemnities which have ceased to be solemn, that dignity is to be acquired, nor is it by pantomine or burlesque that the thews of our nationality are to be strengthened. Periwigs and Gold-sticks have had their day, and it is not well for us to attempt to set up the mummied idols of a buried past as objects of worship, or graft on our simple Canadian maple the gaudy outgrowth of a luxuriant tropical vegetation. Here, every man is the son of his own works, and we need no antique code of etiquette nor the musty rules of the Heralds' office to tell us whom or what to honour.

We know not what the future may have in store for us. Let the event be what it may, it is our bounden duty to prepare for it like sensible men conscious of obligation to humanity. The problem of self-government is being worked out anew with fresh *data*, and we must do our part in the solution. There are asperities of race, of creed, of interest to be allayed, and a composite people to be rendered homogenous. Away down in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, there is the old Teutonic stock, just as it exists in the county of Waterloo in Ontario ; there are the descendants of the Pennsylvania Dutchmen in Lincoln, and of the New York Dutchmen around the Bay of Quinté ; Highland Scotch clustering together in Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton, just as they do in Glengarry or Bruce ; and the old

Norman and Breton stocks in the Province of Quebec. In the interior of the continent there are French and Scotch half-breeds, with their Indian blood and Indian habits. Then again, across on the Pacific coast there is a motley collection of English, Irish, Scotch and Canadian, with all their varied peculiarities. But the task of fusing and blending these various elements is much less difficult than it seems. Switzerland has carried its constitution safely through three European revolutions, yet, of its two-and-a-half millions, one-and-two-thirds speak German, one-half million, French, and the remainder, Italian and other tongues. No ;—the difficulty is not in the multitude of differences, real or fancied, that exists, but rather in finding some common basis of agreement strong enough to counteract disintegrating tendencies. Where are we to look for such a basis? In a work, lately published, an Englishman who paid us a visit, remarks that “to the Canadian it is of small concern what you think of his country. He has little of patriotic pride in it himself. Whatever pride of country a Canadian has, its object, for the most part, is outside of Canada.” And the writer, from whom we are quoting, goes on to assert that “whatever may be alleged to the contrary, the belief in the possibility of a separate future for Canada is steadily lessening among Canadians.” Is this true? True or not, there is certainly some ground to justify a casual visitor in such a conclusion. We have too many among us who are ever ready to worship a foreign Baal, to the neglect of their own tutelary gods. There are too many Cassandras in our midst ; too many who whimper over our supposed weakness and exaggerate others’ supposed strength. But there are those who do not despair of the State ; who are neither weak-kneed nor faint of heart ; who know that strength comes from within. There is a name I would fain approach

with befitting reverence, for it casts athwart memory the shadow of all those qualities that man admires in man. It tells of one in whom the generous enthusiasm of youth was but mellowed by the experience of cultured manhood ; of one who lavished the warm love of an Irish heart on the land of his birth, yet gave a loyal and true affection to the land of his adoption ; who strove with all the power of genius to convert the stagnant pool of politics into a stream of living water ; who dared to be national in the face of provincial selfishness, and impartially liberal in the teeth of sectarian strife ; who from Halifax to Sandwich sowed broadcast the seeds of a higher national life, and with persuasive eloquence drew us closer together as a people, pointing out to each what was good in the other, wreathing our sympathies and blending our hopes ;—yes ! one who breathed into our new Dominion the spirit of a proud self-reliance, and first taught Canadians to respect themselves. Was it a wonder that a cry of agony rang throughout the land when murder, foul and most unnatural, drank the life-blood of Thomas D'Arcy McGee ?

There are times when the sluggish pulse is quickened into activity ; when the heart throbs with sympathy the most intense ; when all that is human within us asserts unwonted supremacy. The sense of a loss shared in by each, of a danger encountered by all, brings before us with startling vividness how much we have in common. *Such a time it was* when the flower of our youth went forth to repel a wanton and unprovoked invasion. While tears sprang to the eyes of many fond fathers and loving mothers, affection itself was strengthened by the strain to which it became subject, and hallowed by the shrine of its self-immolation. *Such a time it was* when the lifeless bodies of those who fell in the conflict were brought home.

Though a load of grief pressed on every heart, we felt proud that the post of danger had not been left to strangers; that bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh had been the first to meet the foe; that our own breasts had been bared to the storm. *Such a time it was* when the assassin's hand struck down the gifted, the genial, the patriotic McGee. Our country reeled with the blow. *Such a time it was* when the news of the butchery of young Scott at Fort Garry fell upon our ears, thrilling every nerve, and crowding the hot blood into our hearts. Humble though his position was—yet he was a Canadian; his mental gifts may have been few—yet he died for us. “*Spectet, inquit, patriam; in conspectu legum libertatisque moriatur. Non tu hoc loco Gavium, non unum hominem, nescio quem, civem Romanum, sed communem libertatis et civitatis causam in illum cruciatum et crucem egisti.*” Let calumny do its worst—it shall not be said that the great statesman with brilliant talents and high place shall receive more abundant honour in his death, than the poor, friendless youth, who, away from kindred and home, cast all the attractions of life behind, and marched to his fate with a courage and devotion that fill us with awe. As we plant the cypress on the tenantless grave of one unknown to fame save in his death, and wreath with *immortelles* the head-stone of an unpretending and almost friendless Canadian youth, we allow no inequality of mental gifts, no difference in position to separate in our memory the orator and statesman who dared to live for his country, and the brave yeoman who dared to die for it. Were he the most obscure in the land, were he without a friend in the wide world, the cause he died in was ours, and the consciousness of that sacrifice should make every Canadian his friend. There are those among us, God help them for cold-hearted sycophants! who

dare to speak glibly of indiscretion when men have sacrificed the savings of a lifetime of toil, and mutter generalities about rashness when men have staked their lives. We have too little of that indiscretion and that rashness now-a-days. When we have grown so wise as to do everything by line and rule, and so discreet as to yield to the demands of force, we shall have attained a state of perfection incompatible with a free existence. The meanest of all meanness is ingratitude, and there are degrees even in that. The thankless wretch who flings back, in our teeth, alms the measure of our ability, is a miracle of gratitude, compared with him who seeks to blacken the memory of one who died a martyr, or, with malignant spite, to strip all of good from the sacrifice. We have need to stand by each other, and we would have all know that he who places us under national obligation, shall not go unrewarded; that sufferings endured on our account shall not be forgotten; that the man who steps to the front, shall neither be deserted nor harshly judged by those in the rear. We have been taunted with lack of confidence in the future of our country; let us not give occasion for the imputation of want of heart. It is alleged that we are prone to exhibit a cowardly spirit; let us show that we can at least recognize and respect courage.

We may, perhaps, lay ourselves open to the charge of sentimentalism, but men die for sentiment and oftentimes sacrifice everything for an idea. A piece of bunting is not of much worth, yet call it a flag and it may cost scores of lives; a song does not look very formidable, yet it may quicken revolution and desolate an empire. There is a national heart which can be stirred to its depths; a national imagination that can be aroused to a fervent glow; and, when noble deeds are to be done, or great triumphs of progress and reform to be achieved,

we appeal in vain to reason to lead the forlorn hope or mount the imminent deadly breach ; but at the first trumpet blast, passion, enthusiasm, youth, step proudly to the front, and press forward with resistless eager pace. The political machine must have a motive power ; where shall we seek that power if not in the national character ? A proper organization of those high qualities which form character commends itself, therefore, as the elementary work of those with whom the education of the people rests. "You have sent your young men to guard your frontier," said D'Arcy McGee. "You want a principle to guard your young men, and thus only your frontier. When I can hear your young men say as proudly, *our* federation, or *our* country, or *our* kingdom, as the young men of other countries do speaking of their own, I shall then have less apprehension for the result of whatever trials the future may have in store for us." The safety of Troy depended upon the possession of the Palladium. Every people has its Palladium. Are we to be the sole exception ? stumbling forward we know not where ! groping for we know not what ! only too glad to live on sufferance ! fully satisfied so long as we are permitted to garner the weekly wage of toil ! Do Canadians lack in love of country ? Search them out where you will—and there is hardly a nook on the continent left unvisited by their adventurous steps—and you find that change of scene has neither obliterated nor tarnished the memories which ever cling to the land of one's birth. Should danger threaten, we know that the thoughts of many a wanderer would turn towards his Northern home, and we know too, that no intervening distance, no fetter of self-interest, would keep from our side, in the hour of trial, the loyal and true sons of our common country.

Let but our statesmen do their duty, with the consciousness that

all the elements which constitute greatness, are now awaiting a closer combination : that all the requirements of a higher national life are here available for use ; that nations do not spring Minerva-like into existence ; that strength and weakness are relative terms, a few not being necessarily weak, because they are few, nor a multitude necessarily strong because they are many ; that hesitating, doubting, fearing, whining over supposed or even actual weakness, and conjuring up possible dangers is not the true way to strengthen the foundations of our Dominion, or to give confidence in its continuance. Let each of us have faith in the rest, and cultivate a broad feeling of regard for mutual welfare, as being those who are building up a fabric that is destined to endure. Thus stimulated and thus strengthened by a common belief in a glorious future, and with a common watchword to give unity to thought and power to endeavour, we shall attain the fruition of our cherished hopes, and give our beloved country a proud position among the nations of the earth.

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